

From: Carl Weisbecker  
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Re: FCC's "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" 05-311 on "video franchising"

To: Federal Communications Commission

Your rules on video franchising are important to me , because I understand that they affect the ability of our local public access television station to exist and to provide programming of local interest, programs which are different from what I can find elsewhere and that make a unique contribution to the place where I live.

My local public access station is The Manhattan Neighborhood Network. I recently learned about the resources that they provide and received training from there to produce video for local broadcast. I've just produced my first video for broadcast. It is a documentary on Gay Athletic Programs in New York, and it is an example of a television program that probably can't be seen anywhere else. There isn't anywhere else I could think of to go to get support to produce it.

My understanding is that your rules about local video franchising help ensure that our various neighborhoods in Manhattan can keep some small portion of cable TV bandwidth affordably available for local home-made programming like mine. The video franchising rules help to preserve and encourage airing of programs appealing to diverse, local, specific interests that would otherwise not be covered by big media companies.

It is understandable that cable and television companies might want to have exemptions from these franchise agreements with local municipalities, but our needs as a community to produce and broadcast our own shows of local interest should outweigh those interests, because our public access center contributes toward making my neighborhood nicer to live in; whereas, a media company using that bandwidth for profit would just pipe in whatever shows will most profit the company. And, I won't be able to produce a TV show again that anyone will ever see.

So, as a supporter of Public Access TV in Manhattan, I urge the FCC to rule for the maintenance of local franchises.

Regards,

Carl Weisbecker